

Agency Unifies DoD Threat Reduction Effort

JIM GARAMONE

WASHINGTON — Calling it an important step in combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction, Deputy Defense Secretary John Hamre opened the doors Oct. 1 to a new agency specifically structured to meet the growing threat.

During an inauguration ceremony at Dulles International in nearby Loudoun County, Va., Hamre participated in ceremonies officially opening the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. "In the 10 years since the Berlin Wall came down, we have been in a period of transition," Hamre said during a Pentagon news briefing. He said the world must worry about what the future may bring. The past, dominated by the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, meant a simple choice between two ideologies. The world since the fall of communism is "startlingly complicated," Hamre said, and highlights the need for an organization like [the] Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

The agency, directed by Jay C. Davis, is the merger of the Defense Special Weapons Agency, the On-Site Inspection Agency, the Defense Technology Security Administration, and Pentagon offices concerned with chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. It is based in the former inspection agency's facilities adjacent to Dulles.

The agency's creation was mandated in the Defense Reform Initiative of November 1997. Though the initiative contains many cost-cutting measures, this isn't one of them, Hamre stressed.

"In fact, I think [counterproliferation] is, unfortunately, a growth industry," he said. "Aside from some savings from consolidating administrative support, I think we may be adding to the agency budget." The agency's fiscal 1999 budget is \$1.3 billion, and half its more than 2,000 personnel are military.

The new agency is a result of the increasing threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. "We realized [DoD] was not organized efficiently to counter this threat," said Air Force Maj. Gen. Frank Moore, agency deputy director. "We were fragmented and not postured well to respond to an incident."

The consolidation makes the new agency the single point of contact in DoD for weapons of mass destruction. Davis' staff also includes representatives of the FBI, intelligence agencies, and the Department of Energy.

Davis is formerly of Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California. He will report to Dr. Jacques S. Gansler, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, who said the agency faces a formidable task. "We are asking them to address every conceivable approach to reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction," Gansler said.

The new director said the agency will work to define the threat. In addition, his new Advanced Systems Concept Office will be responsible for defining and analyzing emerging threats. The office will have a small core of agency employees and experts from academia, industry, and other government agencies.

"They can help the agency set its course," Moore said.

The Threat Reduction Agency also will be involved in research to improve force protection. Hamre said scientists will work to provide better chemical and biological protective gear for servicemembers. The agency will also look at adapting military gear to outfit civilian emergency workers — "first responders."

"They don't need [military] gear," Davis said. "There's a world of difference between protecting an infantry-

man who has to fight and maneuver in protective gear for 24 hours and a first responder."

The agency continues the work of its predecessors. One section, for instance, will take charge of DoD's stewardship and technical support for all nuclear weapons; provide emergency response teams for nuclear, chemical, and biological incidents; and provide the Joint Chiefs of Staff with vulnerability assessments — around 100 per year — to help identify ways to protect installations and people.

Another section will continue the on-site inspection program. Agency personnel will verify other nations' compliance with arms control treaties and escort counterpart foreign inspectors in the United States.

The agency will also be the central point of contact for the Cooperative Threat Reduction program. This is the program that helps Russia and other former Soviet republics destroy or relocate their nuclear, chemical, and biological arsenals. "This has to be the most cost-effective defense program we have," Moore said. "A Black-

jack bomber destroyed today is one we won't plan to defend against or worry whose hands it might fall into."

The Defense Technology Security Administration's responsibilities also transfer to the new agency. These include ensuring crucial technology does not fall into unfriendly hands. "When the Berlin Wall fell, it was easy to think this would be a friendly world," Hamre said. "But this is not the case. It is a dangerous world, and we have to do more to protect our industrial secrets."

All its components must alloy for it to be successful. "What is needed in the future is a degree of integration, internal synergy, and outreach that was not required in the past," said director Davis. "Our mission statement makes this clear: We will reduce the present threat and prepare against the future threat."

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news> on the Internet.